

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A.

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The promoters of Harrigan & Hart's New York Boys, one of the best men-boys' story papers ever published, made only one mistake—they over-juggled with the name of Frank Tousey's weekly bread-winner Boys of New York, and were overwhelmed by ruthless if not unscrupulous competition. But before the debacle they published historically significant fiction-biographies of Edwin Forrest, George L. Fox, and other American actors of bygone days. Here you see in miniature fac-simile what the 15th number looked like on the front page. Dated Dec. 25, 1880, What a Christmas that was! Don't all write in to ask "Where can I get a copy."

THAT LITTLE GEM — THE DIME NOVEL ROUNDUP

By one of the Brothers

It seem to me, being a dime novel addict and having read the Roundup for quite a few years, it's high time the members who joined the brotherhood in later years should know something about this publication. It was away back in 1925 that our esteemed President Reckless Ralph Cummings started it off calling it the Happy Hours Magazine. This he did after consulting his good friend Ralph Smith who was knee deep in novels. If you happen to have a copy dated April, 1935, you will find the entire set up, giving us the low down on how Ralph got the idea to start off the Happy Hours Brotherhood, and to give the guy full credit he has kept up its publication to this date. Many of his items bear repeating here because I am sure many of you fellows do not have a copy. Ralph tells his readers all about his first introduction to dime novels, how his first was an Old King Brady. Ralph describes vaguely about the cover which showed the old Detective in front of a prison cell, and from the cell a huge snake was crawling. What the so and so a snake was doing, who knows, I have looked through my vast collection of photographs to find it, but no snake. Maybe it was an alligator or an elephant, Ralph might have become confused on the animal as he states he worked on a milk route in his early days, finishing with that, washing out cans and bottles so by night time when he started reading behind locked doors for the rest of the night animals do take on different shapes. I have even seen pink horses when there really wasn't one within a million miles of where I sat.

Well the magazine went on its merry way until 1931 adding more and more members. I'm a bit ahead of my story. It was in 1925 when Ralph Smith started the Happy Hours Magazine and ran it right up to when Reckless Ralph took it over on July 1st, 1930. Then January 1st 1931 he really started the Dime Novel Roundup, the same little magazine we get from him today. Quite a record, and Ralph deserves great credit for keeping up the members interest over such a long time. It was another member, Bob Smeltzer, who coined the name Dime Novel Roundup. Mr. Smeltzer has had his fingers in the pie before Ralph ever did and was Vice President of the Happy Hours Brotherhood. Ralph has published other periodicals. His first attempt was called the Cummings and Clark's Flyer in Dec. 1922. Well these are some of the highlights of your magazine and if you can get a copy of the one mentioned in the beginning of this summary you will read the above items and Ralph's experiences pertaining to his first introduction to a dime novel. From little acorns big oaks grow and Ralph became so enthused with this juvenile literature that he became acquainted with Ralph Smith and Bob Smeltzer who I understand are still hot on the subject.

Just when I got the bug again is not quite clear in my mind, but it must have been seven or eight years ago and through Chas. Bragin to whom I wrote, suggested my writing to Ralph. The response was right pronto and ended up by my not only writing to him, but also paying him many a visit. My article used in the Roundup, March, 1950, tells about one of my trips with a fellow member by the name of Hunt. Prowling Up Massachusetts Way was the title. I finally got together a small collection, but being in the photographic business, took up the hobby of photographing the covers—to read 'em at my age—oh heaven forbid.

The final result, I not only visited Ralph many times, but became acquainted with some mighty fine guys with whom I correspond quite regular. Harold Holmes, poor feller, passed on to greener pastures a few years ago was one who besides Ralph loaned me oodles and oodles of various libraries to have their portraits taken, and to repay them for their kindness and appreciating their confidence in that the treasures would be shipped back in same condition as received, presented them with the pictures for their files.

In some instances where time permitted I even pasted them in albums. I finally got so overloaded with photos of libraries that I decided to call a halt. Too much expense and time consumed, especially as no one else around here was the least interested in old Americana. I still get pleasure looking them over and they do recall fond memories of the days when I read every library that came out. So for many hours of pleasure I can thank Ralph Cummings and his Roundup. Let's hope he can keep it going for a good many years more.

REMARKABLE HEROES

Copied from Banner Weekly, May 30th, 1891, Page 4

In only one sense of the word, can it be regarded as a novel statement when the fact is here recorded that Literature has given many heroes to the world, and perhaps more than one reader will have to think a moment over this remark before the subtle delicacy of its genial wit strikes home. But it is the most essentially a half-dime novel statement that will be news to many when it is added that literature, if traced from the dimly-distant days when Adam was a mere child down to the present day, would show but few heroes that in the eyes of boyhood would be even judged worthy of comparison with the two greatest heroes known to American Literature, or to promptly reveal them, Deadwood Dick and Deadwood Dick Jr.

Perhaps if everything were known of his career in bookland, Robinson Crusoe would rank above any hero ever offered to the boys of the world, for Robinson made his appearance a long time ago, and his adventures have been translated into pretty nearly all the languages that are printable; but while Robinson is and ever will be a worthy personage, he is, it is to be feared, most decidedly a back number in the eyes of several millions of the boys and young men of today. And then, too, Robinson's reputation was made and safely anchored to Leeward at a time when competition in the manufacture of heroes of juvenile literature was so slack that it is scarcely worth mentioning. Had he postponed his debut until today, Robinson would have had to hire a press agent of the very objectionable type known as a hustler, and even with that assistance the odds are that he would have experienced a severe frost.

Robinson, like many other bygone characters calculated to thrill the juvenile mind, labored under the disadvantage of having only comparatively few adventures, and he was further very heavily handicapped by having to confine his adventures within the narrow circles of probability and common sense.

The modern heroes of fiction for young America, who are now as countless as the sands of the sea, and of whom the Deadwood Dicks are much the most important, are not trammelled by any such confined conditions, and with the bars let down admitting them to the boundless expanse of the utterly impossible, it is but natural that their unnaturalness should bear away the palm of popularity and such as Robinson be left far behind in the race.

Therefore the statement of the surpassing prominence of the two Deadwood Dick's having been so emphasized with some facts about their history from a booksellers point of view, before plunging into the seething vortex of their recorded lives.

Deadwood Dick made his first appearance before the public in 1877, under the auspices of Beadle & Adams, the Williams Street publishers of popular literature for the masses, and for fourteen years he or his son have been re-appearing at intervals, which were at first irregular, but they have now settled down to a basis of once in six weeks.

It was in 1885 that Deadwood Dick the elder made his final appearance after thirty-three volumes of adventure, and his son, Deadwood Dick, Jr., who had been growing up in them for many years, took up the running and has

kept it up to the tune of very nearly fifty volumes more in the six years that have passed since his remarkable father was buried.

During the fourteen years they have been on the market, these stories have been sold at 5 cents a volume, and the circulation they have attained throughout the length and breadth of the land has been in the aggregate something truly vast, for the entire series is kept constantly in print, and many of the early issues are now enjoying a sale of their twenty-seven or thirtieth edition.

It can be easily believed, therefore, that the two Dicks are so firmly engrafted on the tree of popular literature for boys and young men that their position is assured so long as their author can keep it up, and that they stand today, head and shoulders above all rivals in the eyes of the public for which they have lived and for which one of them has died.

American boyhood—and that is a tremendous factor in the land—now knows Deadwood Dick, Jr., a good deal better than it knows its catechism, and millions of young minds absorb the thrilling incidents of his career in his everlasting warfare against crime and his never-ending solving of impenetrable mysteries.

Millions of boys follow his stealthy footsteps as he tracks his vicious victims to their undoing, and then, when the victims are thoroughly undone, the millions wait hungrily for the next volume, which on every sixth Tuesday appears with the certainty of the Tuesday itself, and a new set of delightful thrills go thrilling away from Maine to California.

In England, too, this extraordinary series of eighty-volumes telling of the doings of father and son has been republished for years, to the infinite delight of the boys and youths of Great Britain and the solid satisfaction of the London publishers that had the pleasure of thus getting square with America on the piracy question.

In coming face to face with the notes of a variety of episodes and adventures in the books which the writer made as he hurriedly went through the eighty volumes, and which he hoped to utilize in this article, and overpowering sense of having bucked up against the impossible rears its dread front and mocks the man who dared to face the task of doing justice to the subject.

Once or twice a flowing beaker of maxie, or nerve food, has been tossed off, and with grim determination, the struggle made to sift the material on hand and condense it into something like a reasonable shape. With a heartfelt sigh the colossal task has, however, been reluctantly abandoned. There are the eighty volumes, each so crowded with thrills and heart-tugs, that it were madness to hope to do justice to them collectively and rank injustice to discriminate between them.

To abandon the idea of giving a few extracts from their lives causes infinite pain, but if once a start were made in that direction it would be cruel to The Evening Sun's readers to stop, and it is therefore better not to relate one single adventure. Suffice it to say that the stories are clean and well-written, and until the glut of gore and supernatural courage and success of the heroes becomes indigestible to the ordinary mind, there is much amusement to be found in adventures of the Deadwood Dicks.

Mr. Wheeler may be pronounced the Story-teller from Storytellersville, and the Deadwood Dick stories will be his towering monument.

Banner Weekly, May 30th, 1891, No. 446. Somerset Reader.

Prof. J. H. Ingraham was the father of Colonel Prentiss Ingraham. The noted book, "The Prince of the House of David," we think was first issued as a serial in the Southern Literary Messenger, Vols. II and IV. It was published in book form in New York in 1855 under the title of "The Prince of the House of David, or Three Years in the Holy City."

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

Have you seen the fine Alger article that appeared in the Sat. Eve. Post for Feb. 10th, on page 30? Shows a youngster reading "Forging Ahead," by lamp light, and the reading is very interesting all the way through, and in the Posts Feb. 24th issue as a very good article on the Baldwins, "Maybe That Stuff's Worth Money" tells how they turn all kinds of junk into money, but the Alger in Feb. 10th titled "The Rebellious Parson" sure is good.

Arvid Dahlstedt, 28 Castle Street, Great Barrington, Mass., has been sick a long time, and was forced to sell his collection, so anyone that should have any duplicates they don't want, why not send on to him Pard. He is a Brotherhood member.

James Spencer Tracy wrote most of the stories in Fame & Fortune Weekly under "A Self Made Man."

Cecil Burleigh and S. A. D. Cox wrote all the stories in Liberty Boys of '76 under the name of Harry Moore.

Thomas Doughty in the Secret Service under "A New York Detective," "Cornelius Shea," wrote most of the stories in Wild West Weekly, although H. K. Shackelford and Lu Senarens wrote some of the earlier numbers.

Work & Win, Hal Standish is listed as the writer, but is a nom de plume invented by Lu Senarens who wrote under the name of Noname.

H. K. Shackelford wrote under the name of Hal Standish until he died in 1905, and then George W. Goode, an old Beadle author took over.

St. George Rathbone wrote all the Old & Young Broadbrim stories.

Major John A. Burke wrote the Buffalo Bill Stories. Mr. Burke was a publicity man, assisted by Mrs. Cody. Mr. Burke wrote most of those pub. by Beadle and Ned Buntline wrote those published by Street & Smith.

Nick Carters Story, by his Boss's Widow, by David Gordon, appeared in the Feb. 11th, 1951, Brooklyn sec-

tion of the New York Sunday News. Very interesting what there is of it. Sent in by Charles Duprez.

H. Barr Patten, son of Gilbert Patten (Burt L. Standish) wrote in that "Frank Merriwell at Yale," is appearing on television.

Ed. Leithead sent in the following writeup in Louella Parsons column—Shades of my girlhood! Frank Merriwell, whose adventures were read by every boy in America, was also read by this writer. I must say, my mother never approved, and I used to sneak the books from my brother, but what adventures Frank had! Now Frank is going to be filmed for television by Tony London and Ira Uhr. These young men have formed the Frank Merriwell Enterprises and bought all rights to the Merriwell stories from the son of the late Burt L. Standish, the author. Over 7,000,000 copies of Frank's exciting adventures have been sold in five and dime copies throughout the World.

Our dear Brother and friend, Fred T. Singleton is back with the picture of Harrigan & Harts New York Boys and caption on our front cover. We're all sure very glad you are back again, and feeling lots better, Fred.

Good News, J. Edward Leithead is coming in with a fine article on old novels that had a circus or Wild West Shows as a background. This will be good news to all our novel and circus fans.

Ye editor was up to see Ernest Freeman at the hospital, he underwent an operation for Ulcers, but is coming along very good now, he is at his home now, at 127 Fairfield St., Worcester, Mass.

Clyde Wakefield sold his collection of over 3000 novels to Edward and Tilman Le Blanc last December.

Ed Le Blanc and Clyde Wakefield were down for a visit with ye editor Cummings last Sunday Feb. 25th.

Any one not getting the Roundups as they should, please drop me a card right away, as I find a number of the subscribers aren't getting them as they should. I understand they have been mailed, so???

H. Barr Patten and L. Harding,

both H. H. Bro. Members went to school together back in 1908-9. Those were the days!

Who has ever heard of a story-paper called "Weekly Varieties," published by E. S. Getchell of Boston, Mass., in the 1880s?

Clyde Wakefield was up at the Colonial Book and Stamp Store in Worcester, and happened to be looking over some old magazines, when he came across Mr. for Dec. 1950—Vol. 1 No. 4, and Esquire, Feb. 1950—both have fine article I understand, on old dime and nickel novels with pictures.

Herman Branner, who had all those old books for sale in the Dec. issue, says he still has lots and lots of books left and will sell at 50¢ to \$1.00 each, and wishes you folks to send in your want lists, as he is getting in lots of boys books every day, so let Herm help you get your book wants fellows. His address is 4318 Pennsgrrove St., Phila., Pa.

Ed. LeBlanc, 36 Taylor St., Fall River, Mass., has a lot of novels left, so be sure to write him your wants.

Any one having odd copies for sale of Golden Days, get in touch with L. D. Webster, 124 Tompkins St., Cortland, N. Y.

Just heard from Harry St. Clair of Baton Rouge, La., and he's been very sick with the flu for the past 4 weeks, and is feeling a little better now, but is very weak and his eyes are very tired—it's odd how the flu works, some in the legs, some the back, and Lord knows where.

"SIDE NOTES"

An occasional paper about old books, old printing types, penny dreadfuls, Toy Theatres.

J. A. Birkbeck

51 Marchmont Rd., Edinburgh 9
Scotland

WANTED

Beadle's Dime Library

Nos. 131, 137, 304, 599.

Beadle's Half Dime Library

Nos. 24, 58, 71, 153, 300, 409.

Street & Smith Novels in Medal Lib.

Nos. 18, 45, 48, 50, 51, 53, 57.

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Books Wanted by Kirk Munroe.

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Aeronautical Dime Novels, Balloons, Rockets, Planes, etc., wanted by Colonel Richard Gimbel, Hqs. Tenth Air Force, Selfridge AF Base, Michigan.

WANTED

Old Cigarette Cards issued by Allen & Ginter, Mecca, Turkish Trophies, Zira, Kinney, Hassan, etc., picturing Indians, Cowboys, Athletes, Actresses etc. Early Valentines, Advertising Cards, U. S. & Foreign Picture Postcards, used or unused. Early Automobile Catalogs and Number Plates. Early Books, pictures, advertising material on or about the Great Lakes. Used envelopes, with or without stamps, with odd, unusual cancellations, any period. Worcester precancels. U. S. and foreign stamps, coins, paper money.

Will pay Cash or give good exchange in stamps for anything we can use in the above material. May we hear from you?

COLONIAL

BOOK & STAMP STORE

798a Main St.. Worcester 3, Mass.

PARTIAL MEMBERSHIP LIST OF H. H. BRO. MEMBERS FOR 1951

5. Fred T. Singleton, 5724 S. W. 20th St., Miami 44, Fla. (new address)
11. Charles Bragin, 1525 W. 12th St., Brooklyn 4, N. Y.
18. Raymond L. Caldwell, P. O. Box 515, Lancaster, Pa.
24. Howard J. Fahrer, 789 St. Paul St., Rochester 5, N. Y. (an old member)
27. Floyd L. Beagle, 936 B. Way, Watervliet, N. Y.
28. Edward & Tilman LeBlanc, 36 Taylor St., Fall River, Mass.
29. Herbert Leitstein, 136-06—76th R., Kew Gardens Hills, Flushing, L.I., N.Y.

- 35. Delbert Love, Spencer, W. Va.
- 42. Wm. B. McCafferty, 124 Cynisca St., Waxahachie, Texas.
- 43. Frank M. Harris, P. O. Box 85, Ashland, N. H.
- 53. Fritz Moore, Kansas State College, Manhattan, Kansas.
- 57. George Sahr, 7025 31st Ave., Kenosha, Wisc.
- 61. Eli A. Messier, P. O. Box 1122, Woonsocket, R. I.
- 64. Wm. J. Hahn, 3215 E. Mulberry St., Evansville 14, Ind.
- 72. Ross Crauford, 263 Henry St., Brooklyn 2, N. Y.
- 73. Alan E. Schaeffer, 113 Cherry St., Myerstown, Pa.
- 75. Kenneth Daggett, 169 West St., Gardiner, Maine.
- 80. James H. Van Demark, 113 Vliet St., Cohoes, N. Y.
- *95. J. H. Ambruster, 1458 Pensacola Ave., Chicago 13, Ill.

New Members

- 204. F. Thurlow Brown, 779 Salem St., South Groveland, Mass.
- 205. Ross R. Deveau, 634 A. Orange Ave., So. Pasadena, Calif.

New Addresses

- 37. Joseph Kragic, c/o Dr. W. S. Carnes, 1210 Woodland Av., N.W., Canton, O.
- 106. David C. Adams, Coronet Theatre, 130 W. Main St., Alhambra, Calif.
- 155. John W. Schaefer, 428 N. Formosa Ave., Los Angeles 36, Calif.
- 181. J. W. Martin, 222 C. St., South San Francisco, Calif.
- 51. Stanley A. Pachon, 520 E. 5th St., Bethlehem, Pa.

FOR SALE

- Old notice for Aug. 5th 1879, Northbridge, Mass. Notice to the Owners or keepers of dogs, good, 25c.
- New York Supreme Court, April 5th, 1900 (The People of the State of New York against Olda Nethereale. Good, price 15c.
- Thoughts for the Times, No. 2. The Soul-Ruining Liquor Traffic, 4 pages. No. 5, High License the Monopoly of Abomination, 8 pages, No. 6 The Delusion of High License, 8 pages, 10c each or all 3 for 25c.
- Western Poems, by Col. Charles D. Randolph, 1925, on Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill, Texas Jack, Buckskin Bill, Pawnee Bill, Miller Brothers 101 Ranch, and many others. Nice, 25c.
- Treasure Chest of Old Time Song Hits, 1935, 20c.
- Little Pillows, or Good Night Thoughts for the Little ones. 1881—94 pages, cloth bound, good, 25c.
- Wreck of the Chancellor by Jules Verne. Portrait of Jules Verne in front of story, nice, 35c.
- The Body Beautiful, by Nannette M. Pratt, 1902. Well illustrated, good, 50c.
- The Contemplatist, Series of Essays, by William Mudford, 1810, good, has 21 copies bound in leather and cardboard. Has stamp on it, price, 50c.
- The Traditions, A Legendary Tale, in 2 vols. Vol. 1, 1816. Bound in cardboard and leather. Price 25c.
- Book of Martyrs, or a history of the lives, sufferings and triumphant deaths of the primitive and protestant martyrs. 1832. Full of pictures of cruelty of all kinds, by Amos Blanchard. Rare. Bd in leather, price \$1.00.
- The Northfield Bank Raid, Sept. 7, 1876, of the James Boys and Youngers raid on the bank at Northfield, Minn. 1948. Price 50c.
- 1 Pair old green colored glasses in wooden case, with designs on it, steel frames, looks like one of the first ever made, a real antique if you ask me. \$5.00 takes it, cash or trade.
- Work & Win #796 797 800 to 838 841 843 to 851 853 to 856 858 to 870 872 873 875 to 882 884 885 887 to 892 894 896 898 to 904 907 920 to 931 933 to 935 937 938 944 to 952 954 956 958 to 961 965 967 968 975 979 to 982 985 987 to 989 1000 1011 1026 1028 1049 1072 1082 at 50c each, all in nice condition.

Everything sent postpaid and insured.

Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.

FOR SALE

Priced according to condition and rarity.

Frank Reade Library No. 5 6 8 9 10 12 13 at \$2.00 each.

Comrades No. 61 62 63 64 65 66 72 74 at \$1.00 each.

Shield Weekly, complete set, quite rare, No. 1 to 22 for \$40.00.

Tip Top Weekly No. 99 109 111 122 151 157 158 165 195 65c each. No. 93 94 95 96 97 98 136 at 50c each. Most all issues from 300 to 850.

Buffalo Bill Stories, No. 96 109 112 124 126 130 131 132 140 147 148 155 158 174 191 204 225 460 477 481 530 \$1.50 each. 116 141 152 166 337 406 419 438 474 479 at \$1.00 each. 164 169 189 411 432 460 465 468 549 75c each. 123 167 178 202 204 220 231 234 50c each. 46 50 59 72 73 100 114 142 144 149 157 169 343 427 451, 35c each.

Liberty Boys of 76, No. 624 688 715 718 719 721 722 727 733 748 764 807 838 912 916 917 918 964 992, \$1.25 each.

New Nick Carter Weekly, No. 601 603 606 613 614 617 622 623 627 631 632 635 to 652 654 to 679 681 to 684 686 to 691 693 to 695 698 699 \$1 each. Have hundreds more from No. 250 to 819.

Frank Reade Weekly, No. 9 21 47 at \$3.00 each. 14 18 at \$4.00 each.

N. Y. Detective Library, No. 29 40 58 62 66 69 78 80 85 88 107 128 148 158 174 190 204 205 213 214 216 265 268, at \$1.50 each.

Also have lots of Pluck and Luck, Secret Service, Work and Win, Fame and Fortune, Brave and Bold, James Boys Stories in New York Detective Libraries, Beadles Dime and Half Dime Libraries and what not. Send your want lists.

I need Wide Awake Library (Frank Reade Stories) No. 627 631 633 667 697.

Also Frank Reade Weekly, James Boys Weekly and Young Klondike.

CLARENCE ORSER

Washington Ave.

Bemidji, Minn.